

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 L-03 AGRE-00 SS-15
CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01
SP-02 JUSE-00 SNM-02 TRSE-00 NSC-05 OES-06 OMB-01
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R 260744Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9759
INFO DEA HQS WASHDC
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 0419

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR, EAID, BM, NL, TH
SUBJ: NARCOTICS: COMMENTS BY DUTCH JUSTICE MINISTER ON RETURN
FROM HONG KONG AND BANGKOK

REF: (A) BANGKOK 1144 (NOTAL); (B) BANGKOK 1523

1. SUMMARY: IN AN AIRPORT PRESS CONFERENCE JAN 20 FOLLOWING
HIS TWO WEEK TRIP TO HONG KONG AND BANGKOK, JUSTICE
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MINISTER (AND DEPUTY PRIMIN) VAN AGT SAID THAT HE WOULD TRY
TO OBTAIN DUTCH DEVELOPMENT AID FUNDS TO ENCOURAGE GROWERS OF
OPIUM POPPIES IN NORTHERN THAILAND AND BURMA TO PLANT ALTERNATIVE
CROPS. WE DOUBT HE WILL SUCCEED. END SUMMARY.

2. DEVELOPMENT AID FUND: VAN AGT TOLD REPORTERS WHEN HE
RETURNED TO THE HAGUE JAN 20 FROM SUTHEAST ASIA THAT BOTH THAILAND

AND BURMA HAVE MADE AMODEST START TOWARD PERSUADING HILL PEASANTS TO GROW CROPS ALTERNATIVE TO OPIUM POPPIES, THROUGH EFFORTS AIMED AT SEVERAL THOUSAND OF THE HUNDRES OF THOUSANDS OF HILL TRIBESMEN IN THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE. POINTING OUT THAT THE THAI GOVERNMENT HAD SOUGHT ASSISTANCE FOR THESE PROJECTS, WHICH ARE BEING SUPPORTED BY THE UNITED NATIONS, VAN AGT SAID HE WOULD SOUND OUT DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION MINISTER PRONK ON THE IDEA OF ALLOCATING SOME DUTCH DEVELOPMENT AID FUNDS TO HELP IN THIS EFFORT. HE DOUBTED WHETHER IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO TAP THE 1977 DEVELOPMENT AID BUDGET.

3. OTHER MATERS: VAN AGT ALSO ANNOUNCED: (A) THAT AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED WITH HONG KONG AUTHORITIES FOR THE RETURN OF HONG KONG CHINESE ILLEGALLY RESIDENT IN THE NETHERLANDS; (B) THAT A CONSPIRACY ACT WAS UNDER PREPARATION IN HOLLAND; (C) THAT A MAJOR SHARE OF THE 20,000 KILOS OF HEROIN ANNUALLY BROUGHT INTO EUROPE IS DISTRIBUTED THROUGH THE NETHERLANDS; AND (D) THAT HE HAD MADE A NUMBER OF TECHNICAL AGREEMENTS WHILE IN HONG KONG AND THAILAND, THE CONTENTS OF WHICH HE COULD NOT DIVULGE.

4. COMMENT: A CHECK WITH THE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION MINISTRY JAN 24 BROUGHT THE FROSTY REACTION THAT VAN AGT IS CONSTANTLY TRYING TO DO THINGS NOT WITHIN HIS POWER. BY COINCIDENCE, THE HEAD OF THE UN FUND FOR DRUG ABUSE CONTROL, DE BEUSS, TOLD A DUTCH TELEVISION INTERVIEWER JAN 21 THAT, EXCEPT FOR A CONTRIBUTION TO THE MAGAZINE DRUG DEPENDENCE, THE FUND HAS RECEIVED NO MONEY FROM HOLLAND FOR TACKLING THE HEROIN PROBLEM AT ITS ROOTS. IN A LETTER TO PRONK LAST YEAR, DE BEUSS PROPOSED TAPPING THE DEVELOPMENT AID MINISTRY BUDGET FOR A CONTRIBUTION, BUT WE CONFIDENTIAL

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ARETOLD THAT A NEGATIVE REPLY IS BEING DRAFTED. A MAJOR REASON FOR THE REJECTION IS THE LOW ESTEEM IN WHICH THE FUND IS HELD BY INFLUENTIAL AUTHORITIES HERE, INCLUDING ROBBERT SAMSOM, THE HEAD OF THE INTER-DEPARTMENTAL STEERING GROUP ON NARCOTICS. ANOTHER REASON IS THAT PRONK IS JEALOUS OF HIS PREROGATIVE IN DECIDING WHERE AID MONEY SHOULD BE SPENT. WE DOUBT THAT VAN AGT WILL BE ABLE TO CHANGE PRONK'S MIND. THE MOTIVE FOR VAN AGT'S SURPRISE PROPOSAL MAY HAVE BEEN REVEALED BY HIS COMPANION ON THE TRIP TO BANGKOK, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE FONTEIJN, WHO TOLD US JAN 24 THAT HE THOUGHT IT WAS POLITICAL, SINCE FONTEIJN FOR ONE HAD NOT BEEN IMPRESSED BY WHAT HE AND VAN AGT SAW OF THE THAI ALTERNATIVE-CROP PROJECT, WHICH HE LIKENED TO MADURODAM, THE MINIATURE CITY TOURIST ATTRACTION OF THE HAGUE.

5. ON THE OTHER SUBJECTS MENTIONED BY VAN AGT, FONTEIJN SAID THAT THEY HAD CONCLUDED AN AGREEMENT WITH HONG KONG FOR ASSISTANCE IN IDENTIFYING CHINESE CAUGHT BY THE DUTCH IN NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING, AND ANOTHER FOR HONG KONG TO ACCEPT THE RETURN OF NARCOTICS VIOLATORS ILLEGALLY RESIDENT IN THE NETHERLANDS.

FONTEIJN SAID VAN AGT PLANS TO SEEK PARLIAMENTARY CONSIDERATION
SOON OF A CONSPIRACY ACT AIMED AT TERRORISTS AND THAT, IF THE
EXPECTED NEGATIVE REACTION IS NOT TOO STRONG, WILL FOLLOW UP
WITH ANOTHER AIMED AT NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS. REGARDING VAN
AGT'S STRIKINGLY HIGH FIGURE OF 20,000 KILOS OF HEROIN BROUGHT INTO
EUROPE ANNUALLY, FONTEIJN MADE IT CLEAR THAT THIS WAS NO MIS-
QUOTE BY THE REPORTERS BUT A FIGURE WHICH BOTH HE AND VAN AGT
ACCEPT. END COMMENT.
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